

## Child Nutrition Waivers

Below is the list of child nutrition waivers the U.S. Department of Agriculture granted to the Arkansas Department of Education's Division of Elementary and Secondary Education. These waivers give flexibility in providing meals to students during school closures related to COVID-19.

These waivers are granted to the state. In order for schools to operate under these waivers, school districts must submit an application to DESE's Child Nutrition Unit and receive approval. Depending on the delivery of meals, schools may need multiple waivers from the list below. For more information, contact your local school district or the DESE Child Nutrition Unit at (501) 324-9502.



- **Providing Students Meals During School Closure Due to COVID-19**
  - This is a waiver allowing non-congregate feeding (providing meals to a group of students). Non-congregate feeding is normally allowed only through the Seamless Summer Option during the summer when schools are closed.
  - This waiver allows schools to provide meals to be taken and eaten offsite during school closings because of COVID-19. Meals can be picked up at school and non-school sites.
  - Waiver Granted: March 14, 2020
  - Waiver Expires: June 30, 2020, or until the federally-declared public health emergency expires, whichever is earlier.
- **Meal Service Time Waiver**
  - This waives the meal service times requirements.
  - Under this waiver, schools can serve breakfast and lunch at the same time and/or offer multiple days of meals at one time.
  - Schools can serve up to five days of meals via the following methods: grab-and-go, drop off at pickup sites, or house-to-house delivery.
  - Granted: March 20, 2020
  - Expires: June 30, 2020, or until the federally-declared public health emergency expires, whichever is earlier.
- **Waiver of Educational/Enrichment Activity Requirements**
  - This waives the requirement for schools to provide educational or enrichment activities during snack services.
  - Schools are allowed to serve two meals (breakfast and lunch) or one meal and one snack (breakfast and a snack or lunch and a snack) each day.
  - Granted: March 20, 2020
  - Expires: June 30, 2020, or until the federally-declared public health emergency expires, whichever is earlier.

- **Waiver to Allow Meal Pattern Flexibility**
  - This waiver allows schools to continue to provide meals when a meal component (or food item) is not available for the district to purchase.
  - Before receiving this waiver, districts must justify that a food item is unavailable as a result of the impact of COVID-19.
  - DESE will approve this waiver on a case-by-case basis.
  - Granted: March 25, 2020
  - Expiration: April 30, 2020, or until the federally-declared public health emergency expires, whichever is earlier.
  
- **Waiver to Allow Parents/Guardians to Pick Up Meals for Students**
  - This waiver allows schools to distribute meals to parents/guardians to take home to their children.
  - Districts must develop a process to ensure meals are distributed only to parents/guardians of eligible children and that duplicate meals are not distributed.
  - Granted: March 25, 2020
  - Expires: June 30, 2020, or until the federally-declared public health emergency expires, whichever is earlier.
  
- **Waiver of Community Eligibility Provisions Deadlines**
  - This waiver extends the Identified Student Percentage (ISP) Reporting requirements and the deadline for districts to apply to participate in the Community Eligible Provision program for the 2020-2021 school year.
  - To learn more, see the following Commissioner's Memo: <https://bit.ly/3a0De7H>.
  - Granted: March 26, 2020
  - Expires: August 31, 2020

